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ABSTRACT

The literature on professional development covers five major trends: (1) faculty development; (2) professional development for change in a profession or field; (3) mentoring; (4) professional standards for administrators; and (5) staff development, with almost all of the literature focusing on best practices rather than research. Much of the literature on faculty development complements that on changing faculty roles. A growing trend in the literature focuses on the ways in which colleges and universities shape fields of practice. More research is needed, however, on how successful these efforts are in modifying fields of practice and on the most useful strategies. Much of the research on mentoring focuses on initiating mentoring programs for new faculty, although some also addresses mentoring among administrators. Research continues to show positive relationships between mentoring and professional outcomes, but more research is needed on how mentoring can be used to initiate change. Several professional groups in higher education are currently developing and revising standards related to professional development programs. The College and University Personnel Association (CUPA) Journal continues to be one of the best sources for literature on professional and staff development. (Contains 14 references.) (JM)

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Higher Education Trends (1997-1999): Professional Development

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Professional Development

The literature on professional development contains five major trends:

1. *Faculty development,*
2. *Professional development to instigate change in a profession or field,*
3. *Mentoring,*
4. *Professional standards for administrators, and*
5. *Staff development.*

Almost all the literature discusses ideas for best practices rather than research. Research and literature in this area have remained consistently limited over the last 10 years, although a tremendous amount of literature on faculty development complements that on changes in faculty roles. The trend of college and university departments' trying to impact fields of practice is growing, illustrating a promising area of leadership. Higher education researchers should begin examining staff issues, including development, training, and how the education of professionals impacts the fields themselves.

Faculty development is the key issue in the area of professional development for 1996 (see "College Faculty") (McKellar; Pollicino). The majority of research on development is related to faculty.

A growing trend in the literature focuses on the ways in which colleges and universities shape fields of practice. In an article in *Change* magazine, Kati Haycock describes how colleges and universities can improve public education through communicating the need for reform, helping to develop standards, aligning college admissions and placement with the new standards, improving professional development for faculty, improving teachers' preparation, reframing the research agenda, improving feedback to schools, and modifying personnel policies to support changes in teacher education. This type of call to action from a profession is prevalent in several fields. Discussion of change in dental education, for example, looks at the profession's guiding principles and some current social, economic, and professional forces for change. Ellen M. Libert argues that these forces require new guiding principles to attain a new vision of dental education. More research is needed, however, on how successful these efforts are in modifying fields of practice and what strategies are most useful.

Much of the research on mentoring focuses on initiating mentoring programs for new faculty, but some also addresses mentoring among administrators. The research continues to show the positive relationship of mentoring to professional outcomes, such as advancement, satisfaction with one's job, and empowerment (Welch). Research also continues to show that gender and race/ethnicity affect the way people conceptualize mentoring. Because white males are often in the position to mentor women and minorities, research is needed to illustrate programs that successfully help them mentor women and people of color (Welch). One innovative mentoring model examines mentoring as a large systematic collection of mentor-mentee pairs. This concept, borrowed from the graphic arts and called "macro-mentorship," helps to obtain new insights about traditional mentorship (Kealy and Mullen). Emerging researchers can also be promoted through the use of "duography," which is a retrospective written account provided by two people of selected events or ideas taken from their lives. The authors trace their mentor-dissertation candidate relationship as it evolved from a mentor-mentee relationship to coauthorship during which the participants listen to each other's visual voice and imagery (Diamond and Mullen). More research is needed on the ways mentoring can be used for initiating

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change, such as technology or new strategies of teaching. In general, more research and ideas for best practices for mentoring staff is needed, especially for the administration.

Several professional areas in higher education are discussing standards and expectations (American Association of Colleges of Nursing). ACPA and NASPA are in the process of developing and revising standards. For example, higher education technology specialists have an entire track at the CAUSE conference devoted to professional development. *Currents* contains an article debating the necessity of investing in advanced education and when it is unnecessary, examining the practical benefits of advanced training and the clout that credentials offer, and discussing how to determine how much and what kind of training to seek (E. Ryan). Little, if any, research exists on current professional development programs. Perhaps a Web site of exemplary programs with evaluations could be developed. The majority of the literature is concerned with establishing professional expectations; few focus on what best practices meet these standards. Further research on successful strategies for integrating standards into fields would be helpful.

CUPA's journal is one of the best sources for literature on professional and staff development, but much of the literature is a description of programs rather than information based on research. Research on college and university staffs is virtually nonexistent in any year. With all the organizational changes resulting from new technology, multiculturalism, quality, financial constraints, and other concerns, staff development could be practiced to a greater extent (Snyder). Attempts to implement quality initiatives are sometimes discussed as part of professional development for staff (Rudolph and Howard); one preretirement program is described (Wooldridge). The few research studies related to professional development for staff add insight into necessary components of planning. For example, Sally Zanetic and Christopher Jeffery describe how differences in men's and women's styles of communication affect their interactions. Training personnel can help ensure that both male and female operating styles are valued and understood. An occasional article describes what staff need to examine in their job environments; for example, campus activities programmers are offered strategies for coping with overbearing administrators, a hostile work environment, and balancing the many aspects of their role (Farrell). In general, more research on and attention to staff development is needed.

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